

What is claimed is:

1. A method of determining continued compliance of an online entity doing business in electronic commerce the method comprising:
  - monitoring an attribute of the online entity
  - executing a compliance process on a certification system to determine ongoing compliance of the online entity using a rule set based at least in part on the monitored attribute; and
  - automatically taking an action with the certification system with respect to a dynamically generated electronic seal of certification based upon the determination.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising dynamically updating the rule set.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the rule set is periodically updated.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the rule set is based at least in part on another party's risk of dealing with the online entity in the electronic commerce.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the rule set determines a score for the online entity based on compliance of the online entity to the requirements.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the appropriate action is based at least in part on the score.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein automatically taking the appropriate action comprises the certification system automatically escalating to an action selected from a group consisting of a manual process and an automated process depending upon the score.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically taking the action comprises automatically revoking approval for the seal of certification with the certification system.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically taking the action comprises automatically placing the online entity on probation with the certification system.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein probation comprises manually overriding at least a part of the rule set.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein the rule set is based at least in part of a behavior of the online entity in connection with an online dispute resolution system.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein monitoring comprises receiving feedback regarding the online entity from another party in the electronic commerce for use as the attribute of the online entity.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.
15. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining compliance of the online entity based at least in part on feedback from the electronic commerce in response to activities of the online entity in the electronic commerce.
16. The method of claim 1, wherein the attributes include at least one of a history of behavior of the online entity with respect to the electronic commerce, a country of residence, one or more categories of sales, feedback from a marketplace, and feedback from online sales activity.
17. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically taking the appropriate action comprises automatically requiring an increased level of verification for the attributes.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein monitoring comprises detecting an increase in sales activity in the electronic commerce by the online entity, and wherein automatically taking the appropriate action comprises automatically requiring an increased level of verification for the online entity in response to the detected increase in sales activity in the electronic commerce.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein monitoring comprises detecting an increase in a number of online disputes associated with the online entity, and wherein automatically taking the appropriate action comprises automatically requiring an increased level of verification for the online entity in response to the detected increase in online disputes.

20. The method of claim 1, comprising:

- receiving a request for approval of the dynamically generated electronic seal of certification;

- first determining compliance of the online entity using a first rule set based at least in part of based on compliance of the online entity with requirements for the seal of certification;

- approving or denying the request based upon the first determination;

- if approved, monitoring attributes of the online entity;

- second determining compliance of the online entity using a second rule set based at least in part on the attributes of the online entity in the electronic commerce; and

- automatically taking the appropriate action based upon the second determination.

21. The method of claim 1, further comprising dynamically generating a media object representative of the seal of certification.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising dynamically updating the media object with the certification system based upon the determination.

23. The method of claim 21, further comprising displaying the dynamically generated media object on a website associated with the online entity.

24. The method of claim 21, further comprising displaying the dynamically generated media object in association with an individual listing in an online marketplace.

25. The method of claim 1, further comprising controlling the display of the electronic seal of certification on an item-by-item level for a set of items offered in the electronic commerce by the online entity.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein displaying further comprises displaying the electronic seal of certification to include identifiers for the items.

27. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a selection from the online entity that specifies one or more items from a plurality of items offered in the electronic commerce by the online entity; and

displaying the electronic seal of certification in association with those selected items in response to the selection.

28. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

continuously updating by the ongoing compliance process a current status of the online entity in a database of the certification system;

confirming in real-time a current status of the online entity in the database in response to a certification request; and

displaying the seal of certification in a customized manner based upon criteria in the database.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein displaying the seal of certification comprises dynamically displaying information specific to the online entity.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the information comprises at least one of a marketplace identification or a business name for the online entity.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein displaying the seal of certification comprises dynamically displaying information specific to a specific program within an online marketplace.
32. The method of claim 28, wherein the information specifies a particular sub-marketplace of the marketplace.
33. The method of claim 28, wherein displaying the seal of certification comprises dynamically displaying information specific to specific programs displayed through a search engine or when rendered in a website.
34. The method of claim 28, wherein displaying the seal of certification comprises varying a current date, a marketplace identification, a business name, business license details, marketplace-specific verifications, and buyer protection details.
35. A system comprising:  
a periodically updated datastore of attributes of an online entity doing business in the electronic commerce;  
a rules filter operatively coupled to the datastore configured to determine compliance based at least in part on the attributes of the online entity in the electronic commerce.
36. The system of claim 35 wherein the rules filter is dynamic.
37. The system of claim 35 wherein the rules filter is periodically updated.
38. The system of claim 35 wherein the rules filter is based at least in part on another party's risk of dealing with the online entity in the electronic commerce.
39. The system of claim 35 wherein the rules filter determines a score for the online entity based on compliance of the online entity to the requirements.
40. The system of claim 39 wherein the rules filter is adapted to take an appropriate action based at least in part on the score.

41. The system of claim 40 wherein the appropriate action comprises escalation to an action selected from the group consisting of a manual process and an automated process depending upon the score.
42. The system of claim 35 wherein the action comprises revoking approval for the seal of certification.
43. The system of claim 35 wherein the action comprises placing the online entity on probation.
44. The system of claim 35 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.
45. The system of claim 35 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.
46. The system of claim 35 wherein the attributes include feedback regarding the online entity from another party in the electronic commerce.
47. The system as in claim 35, wherein the system:  
continuously updates a current status of the online entity in the database;  
confirms in real-time a current status of the online entity in the database in response to a certification request; and  
displays the seal of certification in a customized manner based upon criteria in the database.

48. A system for ensuring an online entity meets requirements for a seal of certification, the requirements based on business activities of the online entity in electronic commerce, the system comprising:

an aggregated database configured to store data reflecting a monitored status of attributes of the online entity in connection with the electronic commerce; and

a server configured to generate a media object representative of the seal of certification, the media object adapted to be communicated to a device for presentment to a user,

wherein the server dynamically generates the media object based upon the monitored status.

49. The system of claim 48 wherein the data comprises attributes of the online entity.

50. The system of claim 48 wherein the data comprises commercial activity of the online entity in the electronic commerce.

51. The system of claim 48 wherein the data is representative of feedback regarding the online entity by another party using the marketplace or feedback related to online selling activities of the online entity.

52. The system of claim 51 wherein the another party is an entity having had a commercial transaction with the online entity in the electronic commerce.

53. The system of claim 48 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

54. The system of claim 48 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

55. A method of communicating a commitment made by an online entity in an online marketplace to a selling practice, the commitment communicated to a potential buyer in the online marketplace, the method comprising:

accepting the commitment by the online entity in the online marketplace to the selling practice; and

delivering a media object to a device for presentment to a user, the media object unique to the online entity and representative of the commitment.

56. The method of claim 55 wherein the selling practice comprises use of an online payment system.

57. The method of claim 55 wherein the selling practice comprises a buyer guarantee.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein the buyer guarantee is monetary.

59. The method of claim 57 wherein the buyer guarantee is service delivery monetarily backed.

60. The method of claim 57, wherein the buyer guarantee comprises a guarantee provided by a third party.

61. The method of claim 57 wherein the online entity selects a guarantee level.

62. The method of claim 60 wherein differing levels of the guarantee level have different prices to the online entity.

63. The method of claim 55 wherein the delivering is optional with the online entity.

64. The method of claim 55 wherein accepting the commitment comprises accepting the commitment online.

65. The method of claim 55 wherein the media object is an electronic seal.



66. The method of claim 64 further comprising delivering a media object supplied by an system associated with an online marketplace.

67. The method of claim 66 wherein the media object unique to the online entity which is representative of the commitment is presented together with the media object supplied by the operator of the online marketplace.

68. The method of claim 55, further comprising:  
allowing the user to request information regarding the commitment using the media object; and  
delivering information representative of the commitment to the user.

69. The method of claim 68 wherein the allowing step is accomplishing by allowing the user to click on the media object.

70. The method of claim 55, further comprising generating the media object to include a marketplace identification or a business name for the online entity.

71. The method of claim 55, further comprising generating the media object to include information specific to a program within an online marketplace.

72. The method of claim 55, further comprising generating the media object to include a particular sub-marketplace of the marketplace.

73. The method of claim 55, further comprising generating the media object to include information for a specific result displayed through a search engine.

74. A method of communicating a commitment by an online entity in electronic commerce to a selling practice, the commitment communicated to a potential buyer in the electronic commerce, the method comprising:

accepting the commitment by the online entity in the electronic commerce to the selling practice;

delivering a media object representative of the commitment to a device for presentment to the potential buyer;

monitoring compliance of the online entity to the commitment; and

updating the media object based upon the monitoring step.

75. The method of claim 74 wherein the selling practice comprises use of an online payment system.

76. The method of claim 74 wherein the selling practice comprises a buyer guarantee level.

77. The method of claim 74 wherein the monitoring step comprises monitoring feedback from users of the electronic commerce or from online sales activities.

78. The method of claim 74 wherein the monitoring step is accomplished periodically.

79. The method of claim 74 wherein the monitoring step is accomplished at least daily.

80. The method of claim 74 wherein the media object is also representative of a seal of certification.

81. The method of claim 74 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

82. The method of claim 74 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

83. A system for communicating a commitment by an online entity in electronic commerce to a selling practice, the commitment communicated to a potential buyer in the electronic commerce, the system comprising:

a datastore configured to store data reflecting the commitment by the online entity; and

a server configured to generate a media object representative of the commitment and adapted to be communicated to a device for presentation to the potential buyer.

84. The system of claim 83 wherein the selling practice comprises use of an online payment system.

85. The system of claim 83 wherein the selling practice comprises a buyer guarantee level.

86. The system of claim 83 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

87. The system of claim 83 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

88. A system for communicating a commitment by each of a plurality of online entities in electronic commerce to a selling practice, the commitment communicated to a potential buyer in the electronic commerce, the system comprising:

a datastore configured to store data defining a set of online entities, each the set of online entities having a unique identity;

a datastore configured to store data reflecting the commitment to the selling practice of each of the set of online entities; and

a server configured to generate a set of media objects,

wherein the media objects are retrievable based upon the unique identity, each of the media objects represents a seal of certification for a corresponding one of the set of online entities, and each of the media objects has indicia representative of the commitment of the corresponding one of the set of online entities.

89. The system of claim 88 wherein the selling practice comprises use of an online payment system.

90. The system of claim 88 wherein the selling practice comprises a buyer guarantee level.

91. The system of claim 88 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

92. The system of claim 88 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

93. A system for communicating a commitment by each of a plurality of online entities in electronic commerce to online dispute resolution, the commitment communicated to a potential buyer in the electronic commerce, the method comprising:

- a datastore configured to store data defining a set of online entities, each of the set of online entities having a unique identity and certification status;

- a datastore configured to store data reflecting the commitment to the online dispute resolution of each of the set of online entities; and

- a server configured to generate a set of media objects,

wherein the media objects are retrievable based upon the unique identity, each of the media objects represents a seal of certification for a corresponding one of the set of online entities, and each of the media object has indicia representative of the commitment of the corresponding one of the set of online entities.

94. The system of claim 93 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

95. The system of claim 93 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

96. A system comprising:
- a datastore configured to store data related to compliance of an online entity with requirements for a seal of certification in electronic commerce;
  - a rule set to determine compliance with the requirements, the rule set operatively coupled to the datastore and adapted to be applied against attributes of the online entity in the electronic commerce;
  - an escalation module adapted to be applied against results of the rule set to invoke automatic or manual process with respect to the seal of certification;
  - a prioritization module using results from the rule set and time to prioritize the manual process; and
  - a server configured to generate a media object representative of an action taken with respect to the online entity as a result of the automatic or manual process and adapted to communicate the media object to a device for presentment to a user.
97. The system of claim 96 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.
98. The system of claim 96 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.
99. The system of claim 96 wherein the attributes comprise electronic marketplace data.
100. The system of claim 99 wherein the electronic marketplace data comprises historical marketplace data.
101. The system of claim 100 wherein the historical marketplace data comprises sales characteristics.
102. The system of claim 100 wherein the historical marketplace data comprises a reputation rating.
103. The system of claim 99 wherein the marketplace data comprises current marketplace data.

104. The system of claim 103 wherein the current marketplace data comprises sales characteristics.

105. The system of claim 103 wherein the current marketplace data comprises a reputation rating.

106. The system of claim 99 wherein the marketplace data comprises both current and historical marketplace data.

107. The system of claim 96 wherein the attributes comprise information related to online dispute resolution.

108. The system of claim 96 wherein the attributes comprise at least one personal identity, personal address, property rights, employment information and business information.

109. The system of claim 96 wherein the prioritization module sets a higher priority for the online entity for which the results indicate a greater lack of compliance with the requirements.

110. The system of claim 102 wherein the prioritization module sets a higher priority for a greater period of time in which the online entity is not in compliance with the requirements.

111. A method of administering a plurality of entities in electronic commerce having requirements for a seal of certification, comprising the steps of:

monitoring attributes of the plurality of online entities;

determining compliance with the requirements for the seal of certification using a predetermined rule set and the attributes;

providing each of the plurality of online entities with a score representative of a degree of the compliance; and

prioritizing each of the plurality of online entities who do not meet the requirements based upon the score for a corresponding one of the plurality of online entities and a length of time the corresponding one of the plurality of online entities have not met the requirements.

112. The method of claim 111 further comprising the step of displaying the score for a user.

113. The method of claim 112 further comprising the step of the user manually intervening in the determining step.

114. The method of claim 111 wherein the rule set is dynamic.

115. The method of claim 114 wherein the rule set is periodically updated.

116. The method of claim 111 wherein the rule set is based at least in part on another party's risk of dealing with the online entity in the electronic commerce.

117. The method of claim 111 wherein the electronic commerce comprises an electronic marketplace.

118. The method of claim 111 wherein the electronic commerce comprises commerce involving a website.

119. A method of indicating an online entity meets requirements for a seal of certification in one of a plurality of sectors of online marketplace, comprising the steps of:

determining compliance of the online entity with the requirements of the seal of certification in the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace;

maintaining a dynamic media object representative of the seal of certification in connection with the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace; and

communicating the media object to a device for presentment to a user of the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace.

120. The method of claim 119 wherein the requirements are individualized for each of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace.

121. The method of claim 119 requirements are based at least in part on another party's risk of dealing with the online entity in the online marketplace.

122. The method of claim 119 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is a travel sector.

123. The method of claim 119 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is an automotive sector.

124. The method of claim 119 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is a jewelry sector.

125. The method of claim 119 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is a business sector.

126. The method of claim 119 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is an industrial sector.



127. A system for indicating that one of a plurality of online entities meets requirements for a seal of certification in one of a plurality of sectors of online marketplace, comprising:

a datastore configured to store data reflecting a status of the plurality of online entities with the requirements of the seal of certification; and

a server configured to generate a plurality of media objects, each of the plurality of media objects representative of the seal of certification for a corresponding one of the plurality of online entities in a particular one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace and adapted to communicate a selected one of the plurality of media objects corresponding to the one of the plurality of online entities in the one of a plurality of sectors of the online marketplace.

128. The system of claim 127 wherein the requirements are individualized for each of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace.

129. The system of claim 127 wherein the system is adapted to indicate a commitment to a selling practice by the one of the plurality of online entities in the one of the plurality of sectors of online marketplace.

130. The system of claim 129 wherein the selected one of the plurality of media objects is indicative of a commitment to a selling practice in the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace.

131. The system of claim 128 requirements are based at least in part on another party's risk of dealing with the online entity in the online marketplace.

132. The system of claim 128 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is a travel sector.

133. The system of claim 128 wherein the one of the plurality of sectors of the online marketplace is an automotive sector.

134. A method for notifying a seller in an online marketplace of buyer activity in the online marketplace, the method comprising:

- receiving transaction monitoring parameters from the seller;
- monitoring transactions within the online marketplace that involve the seller to identify transactions based on the parameters; and
- alerting the seller to identified transactions.

135. The method of claim 134 wherein the parameters are related to buyer attributes.

136. The method of claim 134 wherein the parameters include at least one of a price, an experience level in the marketplace for a buyer, a transaction age, a buyer location, a length of time participating in marketplace for a buyer, an age an account in the online marketplace for a buyer.

137. The method of claim 134, wherein alerting the seller comprises alerting the seller via email.

138. The method of claim 134 further comprising providing online dispute resolution for identified transactions.

139. A system for notifying a seller in an online marketplace of buyer activity in the online marketplace, the system comprising:

- a database to store transaction monitoring parameters received from the seller; and
- a server to monitor transactions within the online marketplace that involve the seller to identify transactions based on the parameters, and alert the seller to identified transactions.

140. The system of claim 139 wherein the parameters are related to buyer attributes.

141. The system of claim 139 wherein the parameters include at least one of a price, an experience level in the marketplace for a buyer, a transaction age, a buyer location, a length of time participating in marketplace for a buyer, an age an account in the online marketplace for a buyer.

142. The system of claim 139, wherein the server alerts the seller via email.

143. The system of claim 139 wherein the server refers identified transactions to an online dispute resolution system.

144. A method for providing transaction protection to buyers in an online marketplace for transactions involving a seller in the online marketplace, wherein the seller is in compliance with requirements for certification in the online marketplace, the method comprising:

receiving a request from the seller for third party transaction protection; and

indicating to the buyers that third party transaction protection is available for transactions involving the seller in the online marketplace.

145. The method of claim 144 wherein the third party transaction protection is provided by at least one of a seal issuer, an online marketplace, and an insurance company

146. The method of claim 144 wherein the requirements comprise at least one of requirements for participation in the online marketplace and requirements for issuance of a seal of certification in the online marketplace.

147. The method of claim 144 wherein the request indicates a requested level of third party protection, the method further comprising receiving payment from the seller, the amount of the payment a function of the requested level of third party protection.

148. The method of claim 144 wherein the request indicates a requested level of third party protection, the method further comprising requiring the seller to commit to compliance with additional requirements to receive the requested level of third party protection.

149. The method of claim 144 further comprising requiring the seller to commit to online dispute resolution,

wherein indicating to the buyers that third party transaction protection is available comprises indicating to the buyers that third party transaction protection is available upon receiving a commitment to online dispute resolution from the seller.

150. The method of claim 144 wherein the online marketplace includes sub-marketplaces, the method further comprising providing corresponding levels of third party protection for the seller based for the sub-marketplaces.

151. The method of claim 144 further comprising receiving a display preference from the seller,

wherein indicating that third party protection is available comprises selectively indicating to buyers that third party protection is available based on the display preference.

152. The method of claim 144 wherein indicating to the buyers that third party transaction protection is available comprises displaying a media object associated with the seller to indicate that third party transaction protection is available for transactions involving the seller.

153. The method of claim 152 wherein the media object comprises a seal of certification.

154. The method of claim 152 further comprising:

identifying an interaction of one of the buyers with the media object; and

providing information relating to the third party protection to the buyer in response to the interaction.

155. The method of claim 152 further comprising:

identifying an interaction of one of the buyers with the media object; and

directing the buyer to an online dispute resolution system to allow the buyer to make a claim against the third party protection.